

# **Language Proficiency Adjustment for English Language Learners**

## **Guidance**

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**RIDE** Rhode Island  
Department  
of Education

## Use of ACCESS to Determine Language Proficiency Adjustment

The ACCESS for ELLs® assessment for English Language Learners (ELL) will be available as part of the state assessment [waiver process](#). ACCESS for ELLs® will be used to calculate a **Language Proficiency Adjustment** (LPA) that will be applied to scores of the second and/or third NECAP administration in the students' senior year. The Language Proficiency Adjustment is a statistical approach that adjusts NECAP scores based on a student's English Proficiency level. In order to be eligible for this adjustment, students must:

1. have entered US schools after grade 8,
2. be at low levels of English Proficiency (overall composite proficiency of less than 4.5 on the most recent ACCESS score), and
3. are not identified as Limited Formal Schooling students based upon the criteria described in the "[The English Language Learner Identification Procedures](#)."

The LPA was developed in response to concerns that some ELL students may lack access to the test content through the test construction. The LPA widens the error band on state assessment scores, accounting for students whose limited English proficiency may prevent them from accessing the tested content on the assessment. Setting academic progress and proficiency expectations for ELLs based upon their English Language Proficiency (ELP) level was approached with extreme care. The process was developed to help establish rigorous expectations for ELLs and instructional programs that serve them while, at the same time, maintaining fairness and practicality with regard to outcomes on academic achievement measures in English. The LPA applies a statistical, research-based adjustment value to NECAP scale scores for ELLs based on their language proficiency as measured by the ACCESS for ELLs®. The adjusted error band is greater for students at lower English proficiency levels than for students at higher English proficiency levels. These adjustment values were developed using a progressive benchmarking method in consultation with and based on research conducted by WIDA and the Wisconsin Center for Education Research.

### Procedure for Accessing LPA

The procedure for use of the LPA will be as follows:

- A student takes the NECAP Reading and Mathematics tests in the fall of their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year and the ACCESS for ELLs® in the winter of that year.
- If the student does not reach level 2 on the NECAP (partially proficient), then the student must take the second administration of NECAP in the fall of their 12<sup>th</sup> grade year.
- If the student does not meet the [necessary improvement](#) on NECAP from 11<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade or attain a level 2 on the second administration of NECAP, then an adjustment will be applied to the higher of the two NECAP scores in either Reading or Mathematics or both (depending on the test(s) on which the student failed to attain level 2 or show improvement). ACCESS overall composite proficiency level scores from the previous winter will be used to calculate the adjustment value.
  - Students at English language proficiency levels 1-3 are eligible for an adjustment to their NECAP Reading test
  - Students at English language proficiency levels 1-4 are eligible for an adjustment to their NECAP Mathematics test.

***The LPA will be calculated at RIDE and returned in the data file to the districts accompanying NECAP second and third administration score release.***

- If the student does not meet the requirement with the adjusted error band, then the student may take the NECAP again in the spring of 12<sup>th</sup> grade year. The LPA will be applied again to the spring score if it is higher than the previous two scores. In this case, the LPA will be calculated using the most recent ACCESS score (from the 12<sup>th</sup> grade year).

#### **Use of LPA in the Waiver Process**

If the student meets the appropriate level of proficiency through the adjusted NECAP scaled score, the score may be used as a piece of evidence of the student's mastery as part of the waiver process. Evidence used must, at a minimum, be aligned to the 9 – 10 grade level standards. No one piece or type of evidence is sufficient to demonstrate that a student meets the proficiency requirement in the waiver determination. ELL students must meet the eligibility criteria, outlined in the [Rhode Island Waiver Process](#), in order to move forward in the waiver process.